DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 433 715 FL 025 966

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TITLE Out of Class Learning Experiences and Students' Perceptions of Their Impact on English Conversation Skills.

PUB DATE 1999-00-00
NOTE 28p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *English (Second Language); *Experiential Learning; Foreign Students; Higher Education; Intensive Language Courses; *Interpersonal Communication; Listening Comprehension; Recreational Activities; *Second Language Learning; Skill Development; *Speech Skills; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS Indiana University Bloomington

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the out-of-class learning experiences of non-native speakers of English, and the impact of the experiences on the individuals' second-language conversation skills. Subjects were eight international students enrolled in an intensive English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program at Indiana University, Bloomington. Data were gathered through structured interviews. Results indicate that most of the subjects relied heavily on independent leisure activities to improve their English conversational skills, and thought some of the activities had a positive effect on their conversation skills, particularly listening comprehension. It is suggested that since all types of leisure activities do not work for all learners, ESL teachers should assist students in identifying appropriate activities. In addition, use of English during these leisure activities should occur with enough guidance to prevent fossilization of bad language habits. The transcript of one interview is appended. Contains 13 references. (MSE)

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ED 433 715

1. Title of Paper: "Out of Class Learning Experiences and Students' Perceptions of Their Impact on English Conversation Skills"

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The purpose of this paper was to investigate out of class learning experiences of non-native speakers of English and their perceptions of the impact these experiences have on their second language conversation skills. Subjects were eight international students who had studied English as a second language and were enrolled in the Intensive English Program at Indiana University located in Bloomington of the state of Indiana. Data were gathered through interviews that asked a series of questions. It was found that most of the subjects relied heavily on independent leisure activities to improve their English conversational skills and thought some type of the leisure activities have a positive effect on the conversational skills (particularly listening comprehension skills). It was suggested that since all types of leisure activities do not work for all learners, ESL/EFL teachers should help them identify appropriate leisure activities for themselves. Also the use of leisure activities for improving English conversational skills should occur with sufficient guidance to prevent the fossilization of the bad language habits.

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INTRODUCTION

Classroom second language instruction does not always facilitate the full development of second language conversation skills (listening comprehension and oral skills). In part, the failure of classrooms to impart conversation skills can be attributed to the failure of teachers to reinforce conversation skills, the quality of the learning environment, and other factors (Safnil, 1990; Kleberg, 1992). However, even with improvements in these areas, the overall impact of in-class experiences on a student's conversation skills is limited unless coupled with meaningful out of class experiences (D'iachenko, 1991). While there have been some relatively successful attempts to relate students' out of class experiences to their in-class activities, these methods are not sufficient to supplant out of class experiences (Beebe and Leonard, 1994; D'iachenko, 1991).

Although the importance of out of class experiences has been recognized in the research, little research has been done on the nature of those experiences, and the research that has been done has been conflicting. While conversations with native language speakers has been seen as an important out of class experiences (Kehe and Kehe, 1994; Beebe and Leonard, 1994), some research has shown that these experiences may not always be the best way to acquire second language conversation skills (Cots, 1991; Brooks, 1992). Factors such as the linguistic and cultural competence of the native speaker as well as the compatibility of conversation partners may alternately contribute to or undermine the impact of this activity (Cots, 1991; Brooks, 1992; Spelman, 1992). Other out of class experiences may be equally problematic. For example, research suggests that activities such as watching television may be detrimental to the development of second language conversation skills. This is because dialogues on television may not always follow the rules of naturally occurring conversation (Salzman, 1989). In spite of these difficulties, research suggests that students who actively seek opportunities to speak a

second language-- both in and out of the classroom --become more proficient in second language conversation than students who do not seek such opportunities (Yang, 1993).

This study attempts to identify the out of class learning experiences of non-native speakers of English who are studying in an Intensive English Program (IEP) at a major university in the midwestern part of the United States. Of particular interest to this study are the leisure activities of participants in this program and the participants' perceptions of the impact these leisure activities have on their second language conversation skills.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The primary focus of this study is out of class learning experiences of Intensive English Program students who are trying to improve their English conversation skills. The Intensive English Program (IEP) of Indiana University has the goal to increase the English language skills of non-native English speakers to the level needed for study at a college or university in the U.S. Students also participate in IEP to attain a variety of other goals, e.g., to improve vocational opportunities. There are seven levels in the program, with basic English instruction in level one and advanced instruction in levels six and seven. All levels meet for 25 classroom hours each week. Levels one through five (beginning through intermediate levels) use written materials, classroom interaction, and the language laboratory, while level six and seven develop library and research-paper skills, as well as content-oriented skills. After completing level six, most students are ready to begin their academic work at a college or university. For the purposes of this study, we use conversation skills to mean oral communication skills and listening comprehension skills.

This study also makes use of the term TOEFL. TOEFL stands for Test of English as a Foreign Language. It is a standardized test designed to measure the general English proficiency of non-native speakers. It consists of five sub-tests: listening comprehension, structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing ability. Test scores are primarily used to help evaluate the English language ability of applicants to colleges and

universities in the U.S. and Canada. The TOEFL is owned and run by the ETS (Educational Testing Service).

Another term employed by this study is motivation. For the purposes of this study motivation will be used to mean factors that determine a person's desire to do something. In second language learning, learning may be affected by two types of motivation: instrumental motivation-- learning a language because of an instrumental goal, such as getting a job; and integrative motivation-- learning a language in order to communicate with people of another culture (Blatt, Richards, Weber, 1985). The final term needing clarification is target language. A target language is the language being learned by a second language student.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Subject Selection

The subjects in this study are international students who study English as a second language and are currently enrolled in the Intensive English Program (IEP) at a major university in the midwestern region of the United States. Eight IEP students were interviewed for this study. All of the participants come from Asian countries and use a language system that has roots in Chinese. Of the eight participants, five are Korean, two are Japanese, and one is Chinese. Two of the eight IEP students are females and all ranged in age from 24 to 30. All of the IEP students are college graduates who are trying to improve their English language skills. All of the participants have a vested interest in learning English. As will be discussed later, the participants in this study want to learn English for reasons ranging from vocational goals to academic goals. All of the participants expressed a strong desire to improve their English language skills and, more specifically, to improve their English conversation skills. Due to the participants' strong motivation to improve their English conversation skills, it is expected that the participants

will be actively engaging in a variety of out of class activities in order to improve their second language skills.

Procedures

This study used interviews as the main data gathering technique. Each participant was interviewed for about ten to fifteen minutes. The format of the interviews was semi-structured. Participants were asked a series of general questions. Although the general meaning of each question remained constant in all interviews, some variation of the questions was necessary for the sake of clarity and to overcome language barriers between the interviewers and interviewees. The general questions used for this study follow:

1. What is your native language?
2. What is your goal for learning English?
3. How much time do you spend outside of the classroom trying to improve your English conversation skills?
4. Describe what you do to improve your English conversation skills outside of the classroom. [If participants had difficulty responding to this request, they were asked the following questions.]
    a. What do you do in your leisure time to improve your English conversation skills?
    b. Do you listen to music in English?
    c. Do you watch television?
    d. Do you have a native English speaker as a conversation partner?
5. Do you think leisure activities can be useful in improving your English conversation skills?
6. In what ways are these activities useful in improving your English conversation skills?

Interviews were tape-recorded for later transcription. The transcriptions were then unitized and each unit of information was placed on separate index cards. Subsequently, the index cards were coded and sorted according to situational factors (who, what, when, and where). The following steps were then taken to develop categories: 1) We selected the first card from the pile of units and placed it an unnamed pile; 2) For each new card, we determined whether it was similar to a previous card or whether it was substantively different; 3) When the original pile was exhausted, we examined the new piles to determine what categories had emerged ; 4) We reviewed the set of categories to see if there was category overlap or category relatedness.

Trustworthiness

We, as the compilers of this study, embarked on this study with certain biases. All of us have experiences learning or teaching a second language. Our experiences have shown us that out of class activities can have a significant impact on a student's ability to acquire a second language. As a result, we approached this study with considerable optimism that the participants in this study would find their out of class experiences to be of critical importance to their development of second language conversation skills. Several measures were taken to prevent our biases from undermining our study and to ensure the credibility and reliability of the results of this study. We met frequently to discuss our findings and to come to a consensus about the results of this study. Furthermore, the transcriptions of the interviews were shown to the participants in this study for comment and verification of the transcribed data. In addition to this, colleagues in Language Education were asked to comment on the findings that emerged from this study.

RESULTS

Reasons for studying English

Instrumental Motivation

Academic

There are three respondents who stated that their primary aim of studying English is to further their academic studies. All three of these respondents expressed interest in earning a Master's degree or a Doctoral degree in a graduate school in the United States. One participant's aim of studying English changed after arriving in the United States to study English. "I came here," he said, "to learn English but now my aim is changing. Now I want to attend some graduate schools [or] university in America."[1]

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[1]The language difficulties of the participants necessitates some editing of their quotations. Throughout this study, all modifications of the participants' quotations will be marked by brackets. Where modifications occur, only the grammar of sentences has been altered. Our modifications are faithful to the original meaning of the quote.

For foreign students, entrance into an American university depends in part on their performance on TOEFL. One participant noted that "To enter university, TOEFL and GRE [scores are an] important thing. So...I usually study [for the] GRE and TOEFL." Another participant stated that his immediate aim for studying English was "to improve my English skills and listening, including speaking and TOEFL."

Vocational

Three other participants expressed interest in learning English in order to advance their careers. The importance of English to their future or present careers was noted by all three of these participants. One participant stated that "In Korea, speaking English is becom[ing] more essential to find [a] job." Another participant stated that she wanted "to learn English because I would like to work with a trading company."

Integrative Motivation

Two participants expressed a strong desire to learn English so that they could live in the United States for a long period of time or permanently. A participant from Korea, stated that her "goal to learn English is to live in the U.S." Improved English skills, for both of these participants, are viewed as being critical to their future plans to live in the United States. One participant also stated that English enabled him "to communicate with foreign students."

Description of Leisure Activities

Independent activities

When asked to describe the activities they normally do to improve their English outside of class, most participants identified watching television as their favorite learning activity. A typical response was "If I have time I always watch TV" or "I spend a lot of time watching TV." There was one respondent who said that watching television is an easy-to-do-activity for him because "I don't have to wait for other people. I can watch it by myself."

Many participants also consider going to the movies as a leisure activity that helps them improve their English conversation skills outside of class. In addition to this, some of the participants in the study used videos to help improve their English conversation skills. One respondent commented that "I borrow videotapes from...[the]...library. Usually, I see one movie a day except when I have to take [a] test and I have to spend more time studying." Other participants find music useful in their practice of English conversation skills. Some of the participants stated that they "listen to cassette tapes," "sing songs in English," or "listen to songs in English" to improve their English skills outside of the classroom.

Activities involving more than one person

There are a number of ways in which these Korean, Japanese and Chinese students attempt to improve their English outside of class which require the cooperation of acquaintances or friends. Almost all of them have a conversation partner who is a native speaker of English. When engaged in conversation with these partners, some of the participants "just talk about culture every week." Others talk about "something such as education or [the] economic situation." The participants typically meet with their English conversation partners for only an hour a week.

Some of the respondents prefer to take part in informal conversation with either American or international friends. One participant's comment was typical of these individuals: "I talk to friends [to practice my English]. Usually they are international students." All of the participants live in close proximity to other international students and many found it difficult to find native speakers of English to converse in English with. Many of the participants had developed different strategies to have access to native English speakers. One stated that he tried "to talk to the [native English speakers] during dinner time [in the dormitory cafeteria]."

Another respondent found travel to be a way of gaining exposure to native English speakers: "I'm a married person, fortunately we both like traveling and it's very helpful to

improve my English. So I [spend] a lot of time [improving] my English through travel." For another participant social functions provide valuable opportunities to practice English: "There is [a] coffee hour at the International Student Center, so I can go to coffee hour and talk English with other people." Not all of the participants found the lack of available native English speakers to be a problem. One stated that "I usually talk to Koreans and international friends. But I think I can practice English when I talk with them."

Participants' Perceptions of Effectiveness of Leisure Activities

Unsuccessful Leisure Activities

Independent

Although the participants often engaged in similar leisure activities to improve their English conversation skills, their perceptions of the effects of these activities varied considerably. Many of the participants found activities involving music to have little effect on their English conversation skills. When discussing lyrics, one respondent replied, "I usually don't understand them. [So] I usually pay less attention to...music." Another participant stated that "I don't learn [much] from music." One respondent found listening to music to improve his English conversation skills to be too taxing: "...listening to music is kind of relaxing for me. When I listen to music, if I try to [understand] some words, that's burdensome to me and very tiring. I just want to relax when I listen to music."

A couple of the participants in the study found television and movies to have little impact on their English conversation skills. One stated that "I think it's good for you [leisure activities to help English conversation skills], but ...watching TV, I think [is] not so effect[ive]." Another respondent stated that he liked movies "but they are quite difficult to understand." As a consequence, he questioned their impact on his English conversation skills.

Activities involving more than one person

As noted earlier, almost all of the participants in the study have a native English conversation partner. The English conversation partner system received mixed reviews.

Several of the participants found the experience less than satisfactory and thought it did little to improve their English conversation skills. One participant stated that "it didn't work well, because my partner didn't have much time to meet with me." Another respondent replied that "it might be helpful, but if I have no topic, [it is a] very boring time." He went on to say that "dinner time is better. I can talk with many people in [the dormitory] dining hall. That's better than a conversation partner."

As discussed above, many of the participants in the study have limited access to native English speakers. As a consequence, they often find themselves practicing English conversation with other non-native English speakers. This is problematic for the participants because conversation errors are frequently not corrected. Furthermore, none of their conversation models in this situation serve as models of English conversation. This often results in uncertainty about the correct pronunciation of a word, the meaning of a word, etc.

Successful Leisure Activities

Independent

As previously discussed, the aim of studying English for some students is to pass the TOEFL and GRE tests in order to be able to enter a graduate school in the United States. As a result, many of the participants use practice TOEFL scores as a way to judge the success of their learning activities. For example, one participant noted that her leisure activities have been quite helpful: "Watching TV has improved my English listening, because my [practice] TOEFL scores have gone up." In general, most respondents found watching television to be a very effective activity to improve their English conversation skills. As one participant stated, "...watching TV is very important, I think I usually watch TV...TV actually [helps me] to study English because I learn more vocabulary and slang from TV. And, it is very helpful for listening skills. So I usually watch TV." This participant's sentiments were echoed by several of the other participants who stated that ; "I

think it [television] can improve my listening [skills]"; and "watching TV ...[is] was especially helpful [for improving] my listening skills."

Not only do most participants consider watching television to be an effective activity, they also consider it to be a practical activity. As one participant remarked, " I don't have to wait for other people. I can watch it by myself." Although television was seen as an effective activity by many of the respondents, the participants' praise of television as an effective leisure activity for improving their English conversation skills was qualified. Almost all of the respondents found television useful only for improving English conversation listening skills, no participant stated that television helped improve his/her English conversation oral skills.

The participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of watching movies were mixed. One participant stated that "Movie[s] [are] more helpful because I paid for the movie...[So] I [pay] more attention." Others noted the difficulties of watching a movie, "close-captioning on TV is especially useful. Sometimes I can't follow [a movie because there is] no captioning."

Unlike the participants discussed above, there were some participants who found listening to music to be an effective activity. One participant stated that "...listening to music in English [is very] helpful, especially to my listening skills." Two other respondents expressed similar sentiments.

Activities involving more than one person

Almost all participants perceived conversation to be an important leisure activity for improving English conversation skills. There was, however, some disagreement over the effectiveness of different conversation situations. A participant who spoke primarily with other non-native English speakers stated that "[I speak] the same...But my listening skill[s have] very much improved. When I first came here, I never underst[ood] Americans. I think now I can really understand their English." This individual's success talking with non-native English speakers was not reflected in many of the comments. Another

participant commented that, "Actually, if I don't talk to native Americans, it's not very helpful. Sometimes I talk with Americans and sometimes it helps. IEP has a conversation partner system to meet native Americans to practice English. I think this helps a lot."

Some of the participants employ innovative methods to find and speak with native English speakers. One participant stated that he thought "joining clubs is helpful." Yet another stated that "traveling was a very good opportunity. I could meet a lot of people, very different kinds of people. So I could hear their different types of English. Also I had [an] opportunity to speak English with them." Finally, another respondent found talking on the phone to be quite effective, "because I can't see [the person's face]. So I have to concentrate on listening and speaking."

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study used a select group of highly motivated students who were attempting to improve their English language skills in the United States. Reid (1987) has conducted research showing that differences in length of time in the United States, length of time studying English, field of study, level of education, TOEFL score, age and sex all have a significant impact on the learning style preferences of students learning English as a second language. The participants of this study represent a relatively homogenous group with few significant differences among each other in many of these areas. As a consequence, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other groups studying a second language.

Even though the group interviewed for this study is relatively homogenous, many of the findings of this study are consistent with research that has been done in this area. As noted in the introduction, Cots (1991) and Brooks (1992) have found that conversations with native English speakers do not always benefit students of English. They have found that the linguistic and cultural competence of the native English speaker as well as the compatibility of conversation partners affect the outcome of the conversation experience. These studies may explain some of the statements by the participants, for instance, one

participant said he found his sessions with his conversation partner to be "boring." It seems in this instance that, much like Brooks' (1992) findings, there is a compatibility problem between the two conversants. Thus, problems with compatibility may explain why a few of the participants viewed the conversation partner system as not being very useful while others found it to be quite useful.

Not all of the information collected for this study was consistent with current research. As noted earlier, Salzman (1989) found in related research that television may be detrimental to the development of second language conversation skills, because dialogues on television may not always follow the rules of naturally occurring conversation. In our interviews with the participants in this study, we found that almost all of the respondents believed that watching television was a useful activity. The discrepancy between our findings and Salzman's findings may be explained by the differences between perceived and actual effectiveness of language learning experiences. In other words, the participants may believe that watching conversation on television betters their English conversation skills, when in actuality it does not. However, this can only be a possible explanation, because our study did not attempt to verify the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of various out of class activities. As a result, this issue needs further investigation.

The most important finding of this study was that all participants used, to a certain degree, out of class leisure activities to improve their English conversation skills. In addition to this general discovery, the role of independent activities was an interesting theme that emerged from this study. One might expect leisure activities involving more than one person (e.g., conversation) to be the primary leisure activity used for the improvement of English conversation skills. However, as noted earlier, most of the participants in the study relied heavily on independent leisure activities to improve their English conversation skills. Furthermore, almost all of the participants thought that at least some type of independent leisure activity had a positive effect on their English conversation

skills. More specifically, they tended to find independent activities particularly useful for improving their listening comprehension skills.

CONCLUSION

Out of class leisure activities will probably never replace the need for in-class second language instruction. However, it is important to note that all of the participants in this study found at least some leisure activities to be useful in the development of their English conversation skills. This suggests that out of class leisure activities may play an important role in any program designed to improve the English conversation skills of students. From our conversations with the participants in this study, it became evident that two measures could be taken to better the impact of out of class leisure activities on students' English conversation skills.

First, instructors of English as a second language should help students identify appropriate leisure activities. As our study has discovered, all leisure activities do not work for all people. For instance, the participants' comments in this study indicated that some participants found listening to music to be an effective activity while others did not. It is important, therefore, to help students discover which leisure activities are suited to their own learning styles and personalities.

Second, the use of leisure activities for improving English conversation skills should occur with sufficient guidance to prevent what Selinker and Lamendella (1980) refer to as the "fossilization" of bad language habits. Fossilized language habits are language habits that become ingrained after prolonged usage. The independent and relaxed nature of leisure activities often means that errors formed through them frequently are not noticed or corrected. If, as Salzman (1989) suggests, television does use dialogues that do not follow the rules of naturally occurring conversation, then it is particularly important that language errors learned from television are corrected before they fossilize. Adopting both of these

measures could help better the quality of students' experiences with out of class leisure activities.

It is our hope that this study will give instructors of English as a second language insight into the out of class experiences of their students. It is also hoped that this insight will be of assistance in the designing of English as a second language courses. This study can, however, serve only as an introduction to this topic. Further research is needed to determine the actual impact of specific out of class leisure activities (especially the impact of television) on the development of second language conversation skills. Studies are also needed of students who live in a broad range of environments to determine if the effectiveness of particular leisure activities vary in different situations. Finally, future studies should also look at different student populations-- in terms of cultural differences and different motivational levels-- to determine whether the impact of leisure activities is generalizable to most learners of second languages.

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APPENDIX

Interview with Respondent Number One

Q: What is your native language?

A: Mandarin.

Q: What is your goal for learning English?

A: I want to learn English because I would like to work with a trading company.

Q: How much time do you spend outside of the classroom trying to improve your conversational English skills?

A: One hour a week with an English conversation partner.

Q: Describe what you do to improve your conversational English skills outside of the classroom.

A: We just talk about culture every week.

Q: Do you watch television?

A: I always watch TV. I also watch movies. I think that it can improve my listening.

Q: Does it help improve your conversation?

A: No.

Q: Do you think leisure activities can be useful in improving your conversational English?

A: I don't think it is very helpful. In my leisure time I do homework. If I have time, I always watch TV or talk to my friends, but they are all from Taiwan. Also there is coffee hour at the International Student Center, so I can go to coffee hour and talk English together with other people. Watching TV has improved my English listening, because my TOEFL scores have gone up.

Interview with Respondent Number Two

Q: What is your native language?

A: Japanese.

Q: What is your goal for learning English?

A: I would like to communicate with foreign students. I wish I could stay in a foreign country in the future.

Q: How much time do you spend outside of the classroom trying to improve your conversational English skills?

A: It's difficult...four to five hours a week.

Q: Describe what you do to improve your conversational English skills outside of the classroom.

A: Doing homework, going to the movies, watching TV, talk with friends (normally international students).

Q: Do you think leisure activities can be useful in improving your conversational English?

A: It's difficult...Actually, if I don't talk to native Americans, it's not very helpful. Also, if I talk to international students they also have problems with English. Sometimes I talk with Americans and sometimes it helps. Especially talking on the phone, because I can't see his face. So I have to concentrate on listening and speaking. Close captioning on TV is especially useful. Sometimes I can't follow without reading the captioning. I like movies an there is no captions. It is quite difficult to understand.

IEP has a conversation partner system to meet native Americans to practice English. Now I don't have time, because I am going back to Japan. I think this helps a lot. To make friends with Americans is difficult. If we have partners it helps. Before it didn't work well because my partner didn't have much time to meet with me.

Interview with respondent number three

Q: What is your native language?

A: Korean

Q: What is your goal for learning English?

A: To get a degree, to get a Ph.D. degree.

Q: How much time do you spend outside of the classroom trying to improve your conversational skills?

A: There are variables, but about an hour. That's an average time.

Q: Describe what you do to improve your conversational English skills outside of the classroom.

A: When I arrived the U.S., I spent a lot of time watching TV, then watching TV is very helpful to me. I mean to improve my conversational English skills, but I'm married person and fortunately we both like traveling, so I think it's very helpful to improve my English, so I had a lot of time to improve my English through traveling.

Q: Do you think leisure activities can be useful in improving your conversational English?

A: Yes, sure. Now my English power is very improved before I came to the U.S.

Q: How does this activity help your improve your conversational English?

A: Traveling was very good opportunity. I could meet a lot of persons. So a very different kinds of people. So I can hear their different types of English then. I can get my opportunity to speak English. So it was very helpful. Then I hope that's gonna be very helpful to me.

Interview with respondent number four

Q: What is your native language?

A: Korean

Q: What is your goal for learning English?

A: For my ability to live in the U.S.

Q: How much time do you spend outside of the classroom trying to improve your conversational skills?

A: I'm not sure exactly, but maybe about an hour.

Q: Describe what you do to improve your conversational English skills outside of the classroom.

A: I watch TV and listen to music in English.

Q: Do you think leisure activities can be useful in improving your conversational English?

A: Yes. It helps me a lot.

Q: How does this activity help your improve your conversational English?

A: It's very helpful especially to my listening skills.

Interview with respondent number five

Q: What is your native language?

A: Native language ... Japanese.

Q: What is your aim/goal for learning English?

A: My goal. In my case, I need to get a job, by using English.

Q: How much time do you spend outside the classroom to improve your conversational English?

A: How much time... Its depend on the days... I think I use not much time, not much. Sometimes, I meet .. em .. My American friends... The friends who use different language, so I have to use English, so, .. Em....two hours.

Q: So, outside the classroom, what do you usually do to improve your English?

A: Em.. Talking with Friends or reading newspaper, watch TV., not so much.

Q: Do you listen to songs in English?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have American friend living with you?

A: No.

Q: But you do have American friend to talk to?

A: Yes, I have.

Q: Do you think these activities help you in improving your English?

A: I think so. I think conversation is most important to improve my English.

Interview with respondent number six

Q: How long have you been here?

A: It about one and half month.

Q: What is your native language?

A: Korean.

Q What is your goal for learning English?

A: Right here, to speak English fluently. In Korea, speaking English is became more essential to find job.

Q: How much time do you spend outside the classroom to improve your English?

A: I not sure, but people say it is very helpful to me to watch TV. Sometime to improve my English and sometime its for fun . About three hours a day.

Q: What other activities do you do outside the classroom to improve your English?

A: I met a lot of people from the other country and have some conversation. I just joined in a group. Its kind of ... I can't remember the name ... I just joined.

Q: What kind of activities do you do?

A: Its a Christian club, we sing songs... Learn in English, have discussion ... Contact with other people from other country.

Q: Do you listen to English song?

A: I like Korean music; now I listen to American music more.

Q: Do you have American friend for conversation?

A: IEP have conversation partner for me, and I meet him twice a week.

Q: Do you think these activities help improve your conversational English?

A: I think its good for you, but for example watching TV., I think not so much effect.

Q: Which activity really helps you improve your conversational English?

A: I think joining club is helpful.

Interview with respondent number seven

Q: What is your native language?

A: Korean.

Q: Can you tell me what is your goal for studying English? Why did you come here?

A: Goal? I'd like to enter graduate school I the United States so now I try to improve my English skills and listening, including speaking and TOEFL.

Q: What about reading and writing?

A: It's difficult. For me, it's not easy.

Q: So you pay more attention to listening and speaking?

A: Yes.

Q: How long have you been here?

A: Now, six months.

Q: How many hours a day do you have to go to class?

A: I have class Monday to Friday.

Q: Do you think going to class help you a lot in improving your English?

A: So.

Q: How much time do you spend outside class trying to improve your English, especially listening and speaking?

A: Speaking and listening? Not much. May be when I don't study, I watch TV or listen to cassette tapes. But now I think my English, speaking and listening, I really try that.

Q: How many hours a day do you try to improve your conversational English outside class?

A: About one hour.

Q: What do you like better, watching TV or listening to music?

A: Watching TV.

Q: Do you think it helps you improve your English a lot?

A Yeah, I don't have to wait for other people. I can watch it by myself.

Q: What about going to the movie?

A: I borrow video tapes from [the] library. Usually, I see one movie a day except when I have to take the test and I have to spend more time study.

Q: Do you often go to the cinema?

A: Not really. I go to the cinema sometimes.

Q: Now, what are you doing most to improve your English?

A: I am studying for TOEFL test.

Q: Does anyone help you with that? Is there anyone who help explain things to you when you have any problem or difficulty when you practice your TOEFL?

A: No.

Q: Do you listen to music in English?

A: Sometimes.

Q: Have you ever tried to improve your English from listening to music such as getting some words you don't know in the song?

A: Yeah, but I tried ... I don't know ... I don't learn from music much.

Q: What about hearing some words you don't know and then you look their meaning up in the dictionary?

A: No, I never did that.

Q: Do you have a native English speaker conversation partner?

A: Now I have some. I talk about... I have an appointment to talk about something such as education or economic situation and try to speak.

Q: It's good. Do you think it helps you improve your speaking and listening?

A: Yeah, it helps a lot. I have so many things to do to improve my speaking and listening.

Q: What do you think of your English now, compare to when you first came here?

A: I think I'm much better.

Q: That's great. Which one of the several ways to improve your English do you like most?

A: Watching TV and talking about something with a conversation partner.

Q: Do you have American friends here in [the dormitory]?

A: Yeah. I try to talk to them during dinner time.

Q: When are you going to take TOEFL again?

A: Last Wednesday I had to take TOEFL - institutional - and March 10, I'll have International TOEFL.

Q: Which part of the TOEFL test that you can do better than other parts?

A: Comparatively, structure.

Q: What about listening? Don't you do it better than the other parts? How is your last listening score compare to the listening score when you first came here? Is it better?

A: No, less than when I came here (laugh). Listening is the most difficult part.

Q: Okay, I think that's it for today. Thank you very much for the informative interview. Good luck on your TOEFL.

A: Is that it? Okay, thanks.

Interview with respondent number eight

Q: You're in IEP Program and your native language in Korean, right?

A: Yeah.

Q: What is your goal of studying English? Why did you choose to come here in the first place?

A: Actually, well, I came here for learning English but now my aim is changing. Now I want to attend some graduate schools in university of America so I am here.

Q: When do you think you will go to a graduate school?

A: This August, may be. I already applied some schools so I waiting my admission. So if it's possible .. Indiana ... Purdue.

Q: How much time do you spend going to IEP class?

A: Now I am a part time student so I take just one hour class in IEP but I usually took five hours in a day in IEP class.

Q: Apart from going to class, how much time do you spend outside class trying to improve your conversation skill? Please tell me what you do.

A: Conversation? I think I never try to improve conversation. To enter university, TOEFL and GRE is important thing, so I have no ... I have no time to spend on conversation so much. I usually study GRE and TOEFL.

Q: What do you do to improve your TOEFL and GRE?

A: Study hard. Just study.

Q: You mean you are now trying to improve your TOEFL score only?

A: No, I already stop studying TOEFL. I think I have enough score. Now I'm studying GRE. Study hard.

Q: When you're not going to class and not studying, what do you do? Do you like to watch TV?

A: Yeah, watching TV is very important, I think. I usually watch TV and sleep. TV is actually helper to study English because I learn more vocabulary and slang from TV. And, it is very helpful for listening skills. So I usually watch TV.

Q: What about going to the movie?

A: Yeah, sometimes. Movie is more helpful because I paid for movies. I already paid money, I have more attention (laugh).

Q: What about listening to music in English? Do you do that?

A: You mean a song ... American songs? I don't have Korean songs in my room. I usually don't understand them. I usually pay less attention to listening to music.

Q: Don't you think it might help when you try to learn some words from a song. You hear some words that you don't understand and you look them up in the dictionary.

A: Yeah, I think so but listening to music is kind of relaxing for me. When I listen to music, if I try to listen to some words, that's burdensome to me. Very tiring. I just want to relax when I listen to music.

Q: Do you have a native conversation partner?

A: No, I had ... But I don't have now.

Q: Isn't that a requirement in the IEP program you attend?

A: That's a choice, not required. Ah, I had but now I have none.

Q: Don't you like it? Don't you think having a native English speaker conversation partner will help you improve your listening and speaking?

A: No... Yeah it might be helpful but if I have no topic, that'd be very boring time. Dinner time is better. I can talk further with many people in [the] dining hall. That's better than a conversation partner.

Q: How many American friends do you have?

A: Maybe 10 or more. I usually talk to Koreans (laughs) and international friends. But I think I can practice English when I talk with them.

Q: What do you think of your English proficiency now compared to when you first came here?

A: Of course, TOEFL score advances a lot. But speaking is the same, I think. But my listening skill is very much improved. When I first came here, I never understand

Americans. I think now I can really understand their English. About speaking skill, for now, I don't have time ... But after I finish GRE, I'll try to speak more than now.

Q: Okay, I think that's enough for today. Thank you very much for your help and good luck on your GRE.

A: That's it? Okay, thank you.